

Inquest on Thos. Ashe.

THE VERDICT OF THE JURY.

After deliberation, the Jury returned the following verdict:—

“We find that the deceased, Thomas Ashe, according to the medical evidence of Professor M’Weeney, Sir Arthur Chance, and Sir Thomas Myles, died from heart failure and congestion of the lungs on the 25th September, 1917; that **his death was caused by the punishment of taking away from the cell bed, bedding and boots, and allowing him to be on the cold floor for 50 hours**, and then subjecting him to forcible feeding in his weak condition after hunger-striking for five or six days.

“We censure the Castle Authorities for not acting more promptly, especially when the grave condition of the deceased and other prisoners was brought under their notice on the previous Saturday by the Lord Mayor and Sir John Irwin.

“That the hunger strike was adopted against the inhuman punishment inflicted and a refusal to their demand to be treated as political prisoners.

“We condemn forcible and mechanical feeding as an inhuman and dangerous operation, and which should be discontinued.

“That the assistant doctor called in, having no previous practice, administered forcible feeding unskillfully.

“We find that the taking away of the deceased’s bed, bedding, and boots was an unfeeling and a barbarous act, and we censure the Deputy-Governor for violating the prison rules and inflicting punishment which he had no power to do.

“That we infer he was acting under instructions from the Prison Board and Castle, which refused to give evidence and documents asked for.

“We tender our sympathy to the relatives of the deceased.”

